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AAE members may reprint this position statement for distribution to patients or referring dentists.

About This Document

The following statement was prepared by the AAE Clinical Practice Committee.

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The guidance in this statement is not intended to substitute for a clinician's independent judgment in light of the conditions and needs of a specific patient.

Dental Dams

AAE Position Statement

The American Association of Endodontists is dedicated to excellence in the art and science of endodontics and to the highest standards of patient care. The accumulated clinical knowledge and judgment of the practitioner supported by evidence-based scientific research is the basis for endodontic treatment. Tooth isolation using the dental dam is the standard of care; it is integral and essential for any nonsurgical endodontic treatment.

A dental dam is a latex or nonlatex sheet with a hole punched in the material to allow placement around the tooth during the endodontic procedure. One of the primary objectives of endodontic treatment is disinfection of the root canal system. Only dental dam isolation minimizes the risk of contamination of the root canal system by indigenous oral bacteria. The dental dam also offers other benefits, such as aiding in visualization by providing a clean operating field and preventing ingestion or aspiration of dental materials, irrigants and instruments.

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